

REMARKS

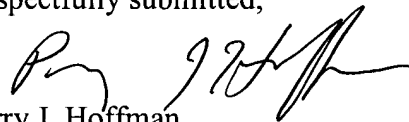
Claims 1-8 are pending and stand rejected; dependent claim 8 is cancelled without prejudice. Claim 3 is hereby amended. As required, to more clearly describe the invention, the title is changed to "Method Of Processing Optical Fiber End Portion ." Also, Figures 1-4 have been designated by a legend as "Prior Art." A proposed drawing correction is submitted herewith, as required.

U.S. Patent 6,425,693 to Schmatz for "Optical Fiber Connector" issued July 30, 2002, has a filing date of May 11, 2001, and Applicants enclose herewith a translation of foreign priority document (Japanese Application No. 2000-401463) and Declaration by translator Eriko Matsui, making the document of record in accordance with 37 CFR 1.55. As required, an English language translation is filed together with the statement that the translation of the certified copy is accurate. Upon review of Applicant's translation, now of record, Applicants antedate the Schmatz '693 patent, having conceived and constructively reduced to practice prior to the effective date of the cited references.

If the examiner would like to discuss Applicant's invention prior to issuing an action, the Examiner should feel free to contact the undersigned attorney.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant has placed the case in condition for reconsideration and respectfully requests allowance of pending claims 1-7.

Respectfully submitted,



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